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**SUMMER  
FELLOWSHIP  
PROGRAM  
2015**

**FELLOW PROJECTS AND REFLECTIONS**

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The Health Policy Commission (HPC) is leading efforts to advance the Commonwealth's ambitious goal of bringing health care spending growth in line with growth in the state's overall economy. As an independent state agency governed by an 11-member board with diverse experience in health care, HPC approaches this goal through the development of evidence-based, first-in-the-nation policy and the identification of collaborative solutions.

The HPC's mission is to advance a more transparent, accountable, and innovative health care system through independent policy leadership and investment programs. Our goal is better health and better care at a lower cost across the Commonwealth. As such, the HPC engages in health care cost trends research through publication of the Annual Cost Trends Report; market monitoring through Notices of Material Change, Cost and Market Impact Reviews, and the Registration of Provider Organizations Program; accelerating care delivery and payment innovation through the creation of criteria for and certification of and Accountable Care Organizations and Patient Centered Medical Homes; and market investment through the \$120 million community hospital investment program and \$6 million for Health Care Innovation Investment. Our values of innovation, accountability, and transparency are at the core of Chapter 224, the omnibus healthcare legislation that created the HPC in 2012, and the HPC's mission.

## 2015 FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

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In 2015, the HPC launched its first annual Summer Fellowship Program to help achieve the agency's goal of health care cost containment while simultaneously providing hands on educational opportunities to the next generation of health care policy leaders and innovators. 2015 Fellows were afforded the opportunity to make substantial contributions on one of the HPC's six teams (see page 4). Fellows are expected to complete a stand-alone policy or research project over the course of the summer. They managed their own time to ensure they met outlined project benchmarks, key presentations, and deliverable deadlines.

## PEOPLE

The HPC accepted applicants for the 2015 Fellow Program from January to March 2015. Applicants were required to be enrolled in a full-time Bachelor's, Master's, PhD, law, or medical program. Undergraduate applicants were required to have completed at least three years of their Bachelor's degree.

The HPC received over 270 applications for the 2015 Fellows Program. The HPC received applications from over 70 different universities across the world.

After reviewing applications, HPC staff spent three days conducting interviews with 40 top applicants. Interviews required applicants to describe their skills as well as propose a project of interest to them based on outlined HPC workstreams.

## STIPEND

2015 Fellows were paid up to \$5,000 for hours worked at the HPC. Fellows were included in various activities and meetings to enhance their time at the HPC. This includes access to some of the Commonwealth's most cutting edge and forward thinking health care policy making processes.

## PROGRAMMING

On a day-to-day basis, Fellows work in conjunction with their teams to see a project from creation to completion while also exploring the intersection of HPC goals with the Fellows' own academic and applied interests.

In addition to their main projects, fellows were also offered a host of programming opportunities to allow them to better understand the varied facets of the HPC's work. Programming included:

- Joining policy meetings with HPC staff and key stakeholders
- Completing "Speed Networking" events with HPC senior staff
- Attending HPC public committee and board meetings
- Participating in small meetings on health policy with the HPC Board Chair, Executive Director, and board members
- Participating in HPC Training Day, which was a two-day event sponsored by HPC staff to encourage shared learning on the Massachusetts market, health care payment structures, public health insurance programs, and private insurance

## ACCOUNTABLE CARE

The Accountable Care team is responsible for fulfilling the HPC’s statutory charge to integrate behavioral health into medical care and specifically, into the HPC’s state certification programs for Patient-Centered Medical Homes (PCMHs) and Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs). The team is also responsible for the development and implementation of alternative payment models, which must account for behavioral health integration.

## RESEARCH AND COST TRENDS

RCT is responsible for developing an annual cost trends report to measure progress in key areas and examine performance against the cost growth benchmark established to curb health care spending in the Commonwealth. This team is also responsible for building the HPC’s evidence-base and supporting policy development and recommendations through the use of innovative data sources, and provides analytic and research support towards the HPC’s Annual Cost Trends Hearing.

## MARKET PERFORMANCE

The Market Performance team conducts comprehensive and evidence-based reviews of the impact of significant provider transactions on health care costs, quality, and access (“cost and market impact reviews”) and by managing and analyzing a first-of-its-kind database that tracks the number, type, and frequency of changes to the structure or operations of health care provider organizations (“material change notices” database).

## CARE DELIVERY INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT

The CDII Team is responsible for leading system performance analyses, including a particular focus on the intersection of quality and cost as value. CDII is also responsible for the Community Hospital Acceleration, Revitalization, and Transformation Grants (CHART) Program.

## OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

The Office of the General Counsel is responsible for building and maintaining compliance infrastructure and developing the agency’s regulatory program. The OGC legal counsel advice on a wide range of strategic, policy, and operational issues.

## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF

The Chief of Staff team manages the agency’s administration and finances and additionally oversees external affairs and the day-to-day operations and administration of the agency. OCS houses fiscal operations (accounts payable, grant dispersal, budgeting), external affairs (communications, legislative affairs), and board member relations.

## HPC TEAMS

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HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION  
SUMMER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM  
**2015 REFLECTIONS**

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My summer at the HPC transformed my view of both policy and health care. I had little experience working in either before coming to the HPC. The staff was welcoming and ready to pass on their extensive knowledge from day one. I believe that I learned something new every second that I worked at the HPC. My summer project of putting together the first HPC business report allowed me to learn about each team's research and work. The report developed into a comprehensive overview of the HPC that will hopefully be as informative to others as it was to me. I gained skills in InDesign through designing the report as well.

The HPC engaged and challenged me every day. I feel as though the work that I produced each day mattered. Each morning I would start the day off by combing through the news to compile the daily clips that would be sent out to the staff. Based off of the clips, I would help develop relevant tweets for the HPC Twitter. My supervisors were constantly helping me better myself and my work. I had the opportunity to see my ideas become final products.

The other Fellows inspired me every day. I enjoyed learning about their various areas of expertise and discussing their summer projects. It was exciting to meet other people with a passion for health care and a talent for problem solving.

I am looking forward to carrying what I learned at the HPC back to my studies.

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The HPC Fellowship experience has been an immersion within Massachusetts' health policy environment. Even though Fellows are assigned project topics that are fairly specific, the Fellowship is designed so that we are constantly made aware of our activities within the HPC spectrum of work in addition to within a statewide and national context. Fellows are encouraged to speak to other teams, attend lecture sessions and policy meetings, and even participate in State House tours. This all adds up to a fantastic crash course in Massachusetts health policy, with plenty of practical experience thrown in as well.

I cannot reflect on my summer at the HPC, though, without mentioning the incredible team that I was able to be a part of. As a member of the Market Performance team, I spent the majority of my time this summer dedicated to the issue of provider price variation. From drafting literature review reports to sitting in on conversations with stakeholders, I had the opportunity to be exposed to a variety of angles in the health policy analysis process. This is especially thanks to Katherine Mills, Policy Director for Market Performance, and Amy Katzen, Senior Policy Associate, who were both so generous with their time and their willingness to let me independently delve into the topic of provider price variation while also being completely available for mini-informational seminar sessions whenever I was in need of guidance. Thanks to Amy, Kate, and everyone at HPC for a wonderful summer!

## EMMA GAQUIN

Bachelor of Science, Public Health  
George Washington University  
(May 2016)

Master of Public Health,  
George Washington University  
(May 2017)



**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF**  
**DRAFT AND DESIGN THE FIRST**  
**HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION**  
**BUSINESS REPORT**

## SARAH HIJAZ

Bachelor of Science, Biology  
Tufts University

Master of Public Health  
Boston University

Master of Public Policy  
George Washington University

Dr.PH  
Tufts University (May 2018)



**MARKET PERFORMANCE**  
**RESEARCH PROVIDER**  
**PRICE VARIATION IN**  
**MASSACHUSETTS**

## KATHERINE KILRAIN

Bachelor of Arts  
Political Science and Classics  
Boston College

Juris Doctorate  
Boston College

Master of Business Administration  
Suffolk University (December 2015)



**MARKET PERFORMANCE  
DESIGN DISTRIBUTION PLAN  
FOR REGISTRATION OF  
PROVIDER ORGANIZATION  
INFORMATION**

My experience as a Summer Fellow at the Health Policy Commission was extremely rewarding. As a lawyer pursuing a master's degree in business administration, I worked on the Market Performance team, specifically with the Registration of Provider Organizations (RPO) Program. My project involved developing a data release plan for the RPO Program, a first-in-the-nation data collection effort mapping the Commonwealth's health system, as well as conducting a stakeholder outreach initiative to acclimate policy makers, researchers, and market participants to the Program.

As a Fellow, I had the opportunity to complete this meaningful project from start to finish, and I felt like a full member of the HPC staff. I was able to participate and even lead meetings with key stakeholders, including health care providers, health policy researchers, and representatives from other state agencies. I also drafted a final report explaining my findings and data visualization recommendations, which will be used by the RPO team for future policy decisions.

Aside from the learning experiences gained from our individual projects, the HPC staff also organized many activities for the Fellows, including one-on-one meetings with various Commissioners, brown bag lunch presentations on relevant health care topics, and several state house tours. We also attended many full Commission and committee meetings, and participated in HPC's first "Training Day," which consisted of staff-led, collaborative discussions about each team's work. Every member of the HPC staff is incredibly educated, talented and kind. I highly recommend the Fellowship Program to prospective applicants!

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## EMMA SANDOE

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science  
Bachelor of Science, Biology  
University of California, San Diego

Master of Public Health  
George Washington University

PhD, Health Analysis  
Harvard University



**RESEARCH AND COST TRENDS  
RESEARCH AND POLICY  
ANALYSIS ON MEDICAID AND  
LONG TERM CARE**

I have always had an interest in state politics and despite learning about states in my coursework, I had never before worked for a state agency. Working at the HPC was a wonderful introduction to all aspects of state government. Over the summer, the Fellows were exposed to a variety of aspects of state policy-- understanding the legislative process by touring the State House and monitoring legislation; working closely with health and social service agencies to better understand their work; and stepping away from the public sector to look at the broader health system and the role that state policies play in the marketplace.

I researched ways to reduce costs and improve access to long-term care for the elderly and people with disabilities for a chapter of the annual Cost Trends Report. I specifically focused on MassHealth—Massachusetts' Medicaid program—because it is the largest payer of these services in the state and Medicaid is one of my primary interests. As part of my research, I interviewed ten leading researchers and policy makers in the long-term care field. The Research and Cost Trends team supported my research by helping me use existing datasets and find relevant quantitative analysis that would further my research.

Fulfilling jobs allow you to be surrounded with inspiring and dedicated colleagues—I found that at the HPC. After each HPC staff meeting, I walked away feeling that my work and the work of my colleagues supported the goals of improving care, reducing costs and strengthening the health care system.

As a Fellow on the Research and Cost Trends team, I spent the summer working on a project related to my field of study - health informatics. Three great things about it: it was my own project, it was hands-on, and I learned more about the topic working at the HPC than I could have in any of my courses.

The opportunity allowed me to interview health IT leaders from various states. It was exhilarating, challenging, and inspiring. The Fellowship combined opportunities for Fellows to work on different skill-sets; I had a combination of writing, public speaking, and analysis for my area of work. Working on state level policy work is distinctive from federal level policy in that you can feel the direct impact of the work that you do. Working on my summer project truly made me feel that I was contributing to state level efforts.

A typical day for me included a few internal and external meetings and then working on my project. On other days, I had the opportunity to meet with HPC commissioners, tour the state house, attend hearings, and receive mentorship from HPC senior staff. I can truly tell that the HPC invests a lot of time and effort to develop this Fellowship. Lastly, the greatest part of the Fellowship was all the intelligent and compassionate people that I met. It will be one of the summers that I will never forget!

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I had a productive and engaging summer as a legal Fellow in the Office of the General Counsel. I focused on analyzing 42 CFR Part 2, a federal substance abuse confidentiality regulation. I created guidance documents for other staff, analyzed the regulation's applicability to HPC projects, and presented an overview of my work at a Weekly Policy Meeting.

Many providers, health policy analysts, and other stakeholders consider Part 2 an impediment to data-sharing initiatives, such as behavioral health integration, the use of Health Information Exchanges, and the reporting and analysis of medical records in large databases. Therefore, it will be helpful to understand the regulation if I work in health care compliance or as general counsel. I am able now to instruct organizations about how to facilitate information-sharing within the confines of the law.

Since I have not worked in a legal setting for a while, this was a great opportunity to apply and refresh my legal skills. In addition, I have just finished an MPH program, so the Fellowship was a chance to combine my law and policy skills. Furthermore, I learned what it is like to work as general counsel for a government agency. This is a career path I had not considered, but I will now be looking at other government in-house counsel positions.

HPC is a great place to work—the staff are friendly, and they welcomed and appreciated all the Fellows. Since everyone here gets to celebrate a birthday, there is also a lot of cake in the office. Most importantly, the people here are truly dedicated to improving health care costs and quality in Massachusetts. Everyone here is extremely hard-working, and incredibly knowledgeable about many aspects of health care. It was inspiring to work in this environment. I hope my next position will be as fun, motivating, and intellectually engaging as this Fellowship.

## NINA JOLANI

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science/  
International Studies  
University of Dayton

Master of Science  
Health Informatics  
Northeastern University (May 2016)



**RESEARCH AND COST TRENDS**  
**RESEARCH MULTIPLE NEW**  
**TECHNOLOGIES FOR**  
**IMPROVED HEALTHCARE**  
**ACCESS AND QUALITY**

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## SHARONE ASSA

Bachelor of Arts  
Integrative Biology  
University of California, Berkeley

Juris Doctorate  
University of Wisconsin

Master of Public Health  
Harvard University



**OFFICE OF THE**  
**GENERAL COUNSEL**  
**ANALYZE THE IMPACTS OF**  
**FEDERAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE**  
**DISORDER PRIVACY LAW**

## RACHEL GOLDSTEIN

Bachelor of Arts, Public Policy  
Brown University

MD/Master of Public Health  
Boston University (May 2017)



**CARE DELIVERY INNOVATION  
AND INVESTMENT  
EXAMINE INTEGRATED CARE  
OF SUBSTANCE EXPOSED  
NEWBORNS**

As a dual MD/MPH student at Boston University, I plan to focus my career on the promotion of health at both an individual and systems-wide level. The HPC summer Fellowship gave me insight into the current health policy landscape in Massachusetts and provided a space for me to cultivate my interest in health policy.

This summer I worked with the Care Delivery Innovation and Investment and Behavioral Health teams to develop an integrated care model for substance exposed newborns and their families. I functioned in multiple roles in the development of this pilot program; I completed a literature review, conducted stakeholder interviews, helped to develop the structure and operational planning for the program, and detailed my findings in a report intended to inform the Commonwealth how to reduce incidence of opioid abuse. The HPC Fellowship afforded an ideal balance between guidance from HPC staff and the capacity to think creatively and independently in the development of the program.

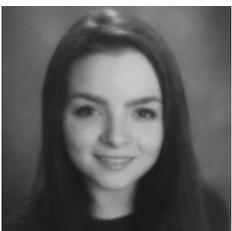
In addition, the HPC made an effort to expose Fellows to the exciting policy initiatives with which the HPC is involved. We met with many of the HPC Commissioners and attended weekly policy meetings to participate in in-depth discussions about HPC policy endeavors. My time at the HPC has helped me anticipate how I can incorporate health policy work into my future role as a health care provider.

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## ADRIENNE ANDERSON

Bachelor of Arts  
Health Care Studies  
College of the Holy Cross

Master of Public Health  
Yale University (May 2016)



**ACCOUNTABLE CARE  
RESEARCH BEST PRACTICES FOR  
USE OF OPIOID OVERDOSE  
TREATMENTS**

This summer, I was a Fellow on the Behavioral Health Integration team, which is a part of the Accountable Care team. My primary project was the development of several sections of the Opioid Abuse Report, a publication the HPC is tasked with developing under Chapter 258 of the Massachusetts 2014 Session Laws. My direct supervisor, Katherine Record, provided me with consistent support and direction and regularly included me in stakeholder engagement and policy drafting.

These were opportunities I had rarely been presented before, and they will be valuable in my academic and professional careers. I worked independently, which required confidence in my research, analysis, and composition skills. Since I was contributing to a multi-authored report, it was also important that I communicated effectively to my teams. I learned much from constructive feedback from my colleagues and supervisors, and I left the HPC knowing that I contributed meaningfully to both its immediate projects and its legacy.

My work this summer helped me establish a more nuanced understanding of several behavioral health topics and the many factors that complicate our political and clinical responses to them. The HPC does an excellent job of facilitating regular contact across all of its teams, so everyone is familiar with each other's ongoing projects, responsibilities and objectives. This multidisciplinary environment promotes collaboration and innovation and helped evolve my perceptions of many contemporary public health topics. The staff members of the HPC have a profound sense of camaraderie and common purpose. They truly treat Fellows and interns as peers, regularly seeking our opinions on their work. For this, and for the many lessons I learned at the HPC, I am immensely grateful.



For more information, please contact:

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